

Kelso Public Library Annual Report 2003



THE STATISTICS

Every week approximately 1,000 people visit the Kelso Public Library. In 2003 they:

Checked out 84,969 items, which is a 14% increase over 2002.

938 Kelso residents did not have a previous valid library card and were issued one. A total of 3,740 Kelso residents have library cards.

59 new nonresidents purchased library cards for their households, for a total of 251 nonresident household cards.

6,282 people signed in to use our public computers (a 160% increase from 2002). They spent over 3,900 hours (a 145% increase from 2002) on the computers.

We offered 33 programs at the Library that were attended by 628 children and 192 adults. Two other programs were held jointly with the Longview Library and were attended by several hundred children.

222 children signed up for the summer reading program. They read 1,599 books during the summer.

Staff answered 3,218 reference questions during the year.

We lent 373 items to other libraries (an increase of 238% over 2002). We borrowed 430 items from other libraries.

LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books: 37,675

Cassettes, CD's: 1,903

Videos, DVDs: 2,155

Magazine and newspaper subscriptions: 88

OPERATING IN A FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE MANNER

Receiving grants

2003 was a great year for grants. We were excited to get a grant for \$9,500 from the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation to buy 27 sets of nonfiction books, for a total of 417 volumes. It increased our book budget for the year by 34%.



Assorted books purchased by Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation Grant.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation gave us an additional \$1,332, which we used to buy a PC, color printer, scanner, Centurion Guard, and printer cartridges.

Kristen Dahl was awarded a \$288 Continuing Education grant from the Washington State Library to attend the four-day Public Access Computing Class in Seattle.

For the sixth year in a row, we received the federal E-rate discount for telecommunications services, giving us approximately \$3,532 in discounts for phone and T-1 services. Our discount rate increased from 67% to 70%.

The Cowlitz County Human Services Department gave us 54 books and eight videos on various children's medical conditions. A few of the books are in Spanish.

Making use of employment programs

Five WorkSource participants worked 1,292 hours at the Library. At minimum wage the hours they worked were worth \$9,057 in wages.

Using volunteers

Volunteers donated 577 hours to the Library. Adam Daggy, for his Eagle Scout project, arranged for 14 volunteers to paint downstairs in the children's area. Georgia Brawand, on three different weekends, had up to 15 volunteers paint upstairs and the meeting area downstairs.

Daniel Shepherd, for his high school senior project, taught free computer classes to 16 students.

Mary Meeks delivered 487 books to the homebound during the year.

ENHANCING SERVICES TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS

Improving services

At customers' request, we began buying audio books on CD, as well as still continuing to buy books on cassette.

We changed our policy to allow people to bring their own computer disks to use in our public computers.



We began improving signage in the Library to make it easier to find various collections.

Providing better-trained staff

All full-time staff again took advantage of training opportunities. Kristen Dahl attended a four-day public access computing class offered by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Later in the year she and Georgia Brawand attended a one-day class, also sponsored by the Gates Foundation, on maintaining, supporting, troubleshooting, and upgrading PC's and printers.

Georgia also attended training on ProQuest, our online periodical subscription service.

Cindy Donaldson attended a workshop on preventing employment liability.

Hope Koistinen attended workshops on developing a graphic novel collection, avoiding discriminatory behavior, preventing employment liability, and marketing libraries.

Kristen and Hope had many days of training on setting up and using Horizon, our new automated circulation system. Georgia, Cindy, and Kim McAllister also attended training on using Horizon. In addition, Hope and Kristen attended training on setting up the Horizon Information Portal for public access.

Continuing cooperative efforts with other libraries

We were able to improve interlibrary loan service by reaching an agreement with Longview Public Library to interlibrary loan everything except for videos and DVD's. The earlier agreement only allowed for the borrowing of books through interlibrary loan.

The City Council approved a reciprocal agreement with Fort Vancouver Regional Library that allows residents of Kelso to get free cards at Fort Vancouver and Fort Vancouver residents to get free cards at Kelso.

Keeping up with technology that meets our mission

The big news with technology was switching to the Horizon automated library software in December. This allows our customers to check their account online, to renew books online, and to place holds on books online.

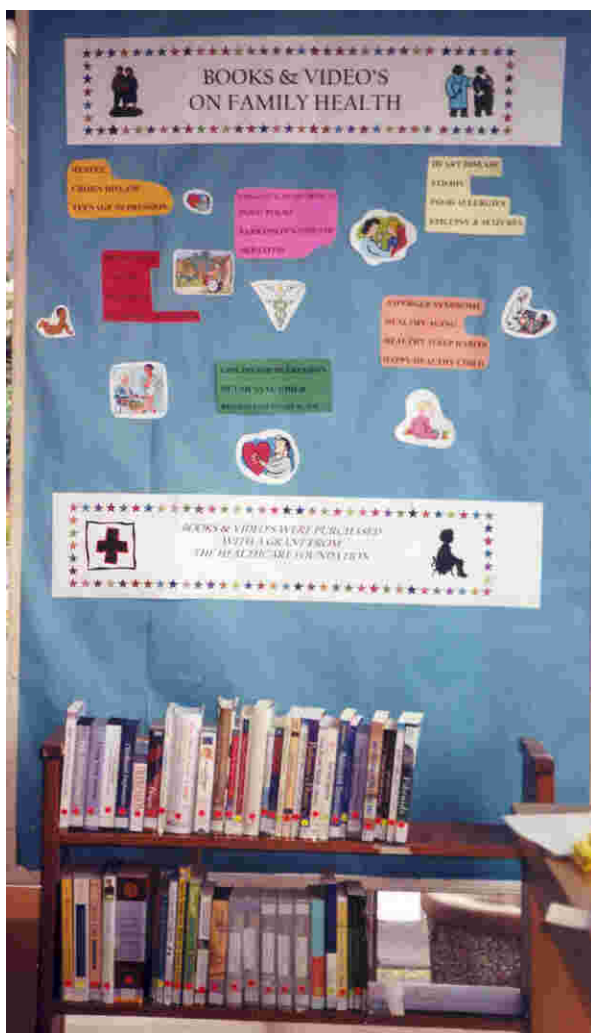
IMPROVING PUBLIC FACILITIES

Using an insurance settlement, as well as Library fund money, we were able to have new, attractive railing installed on both ramps to replace old railing that did not meet new building code standards.

THE FRIENDS OF THE KELSO LIBRARY

The Friends of the Library continued to provide support to the Library in a variety of ways. By holding used books sales and sponsoring a bazaar, as well as applying for grants, they raised money to enhance library services.

In 2003, the Friends:



Spent over \$1,200 to support children's programs, including paying for all handouts, prizes and treats for the summer reading program and the children's Halloween and Christmas story time programs.

Bought a comfortable upholstered chair for the reading area upstairs. Library staff purchased an additional chair and a matching ottoman.

Received a grant for \$2,000 from the Health Care Foundation to buy new medical videos for the Library. A total of 24 videos were purchased on various topics from Alzheimer's to pregnancy.

Spent \$762 on large print books and audio books for the Library.